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ADDRESS

TO THE
FREEMEN

OF THE
State of Rhode-Island;

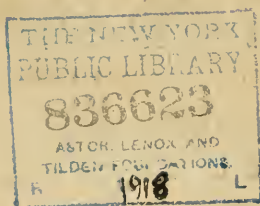
BY
Elisha R. Potter,

ONE OF THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE CON-
GRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

~~~~~  
NEWPORT;

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Potter  
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To the FREEMEN of the State  
of Rhode-Island.



HAVING again consented to be a candidate, with my present colleague, Mr. JACKSON, for the twelfth Congress, and finding that for this we are subjected to every species of misrepresentation, and that our conduct, together with the minority in Congress, is represented in opposition to the Administration and Government of the United States, and in favour of Great-Britain, against the country that gave us birth, and in which we hold no inconsiderable stake; although I do not believe there is a single man of common sense, or common honesty, that believes those insinuations; and although you may be assured, that a re-election will neither gratify my ambition, or serve my interest; yet, feeling myself as your Representative, accountable for my conduct, I shall, however unpleasant the task, give you a correct account of the operations of the Government, under the different administrations, to the end of the last year, principally, in respect to the receipts and expenditures, that you may be the better able to judge for yourselves, as to the extravagance or economy of your rulers, and the difference between *profession* and *practice*: not in the least doubting, that when you are correctly informed, you will view things very differently from what you do at present: I shall likewise endeavour to state the different subjects that have been before Congress the last winter, I shall avow the part that I have taken, and explain the motives, and reasons for my conduct. I shall do this the more readily, as a man is not justified nor condemned so much by his conduct, as by party names and prejudices.

The first business that occupied the attention of Congress was the rupture with the British minister (Mr. Jackson), in which our government considered themselves insulted, and refused to have any further communications with him; and requested his recall: at the same time the President had instructed our minister in London to assure the British government, that he was very desirous to accommodate the misunderstandings of the two governments. In this stage of the business we had from the Senate some very intemperate and imprudent resolutions, in direct hostility and contradiction to the assurances already given by the President; making war upon the minister, while the President had assured the nation of his sincere desire to accommodate our differences: It appeared to me to be something like the embargo, which, while our minister was instructed to represent it in England as a mere municipal regulation, was held up here as a hostile, coercive and very efficient measure. And because I could not discover this insult myself, it being difficult for some of the friends of the resolution to find it, some thought they saw it in one place, and some that they felt it in another, and no two found it in the same place; and because those resolutions could do no possible good, and might bring us into a war with Great-Britain, I felt it my duty to oppose them, believing it hardly necessary to involve this country in a war, because a foreign minister and our secretary, had not been uncommonly polite to each other.

The next business of importance was a bill to regulate the intercourse between this country, and Great-Britain and France. This bill contained three distinct provisions; one to interdict the armed ships of those nations, another the repeal of the non-intercourse: these two I was in favour of; but the other provision, while it permitted our vessels to go to every quarter of the globe, excluded even the trading vessels of those nations from our ports entirely; and at

the same time restrained the importation of the products and manufactures of those nations to vessels direct from the ports of the nations of which they were the product or manufacture; not suffering them to take a single thing from any place, that was the growth or manufacture of another, although both places were under the same government. This provision I thought it my duty to oppose, because it appeared to me that Great-Britain would retaliate, and shut all her ports against us: as any nation must be humbled and degraded to the lowest degree, that would permit a free-trade to that nation, which would not suffer the vessels of such nation to enter her ports without confiscation: and because it was giving Great-Britain such an advantage over us as no nation ought to give to another; as a great part of our vessels would have gone into her ports with the news of the law, which would have put much of our property into their hands, and the nation in their power: or they might have shut all their ports but one, to which all of our produce would have been carried, which would have glutted the market: the English would have bought it at their own prices, and taken it where they pleased in their own ships, and all the loss in the sale, and double freight, must have fallen on the farmer, who had worked hard to raise it. But if they should have retaliated fully, it would have brought about a complete embargo and non-intercourse, which would have been injurious to this country, and very pleasing to the French emperor. And as to all our sufferings, they would have been charged to the English, although would they have done no more than to have followed our own example, and have passed just such a law as respects us, as we had against them. This bill passed the House of Representatives by the usual majority, and was amended in the Senate, and lost between the two Houses.

The next subject was in consequence of a recommendation by the President to enlist *twenty thousand*

*volunteers*, and the detaching of *one hundred thousand militia*. A bill for upwards of *thirty thousand volunteers*, apportioning ten companies to this State, originated in the Senate, which contemplated giving a bounty on their enlistment, and liberty to retain their arms at the expiration of their term. The section providing for their pay was expunged by the casting vote of the venerable and practical republican, the Vice-President, and the bill not afterwards acted upon. The bill for the *one hundred thousand men* originated in the House of Representatives, which authorized Volunteers to be raised, instead of drafts; but the deficiency, if any, to be drafted. Those men were to be raised for two years;—to be kept in actual service for nine months after they should arrive at the place of destination, and might be sent out of the United States at any time, if the President should deem it expedient;—were to be encamped ten days annually, if not called into actual service, to receive, during said time, the same pay and rations as regular soldiers, and be subject to military law. This was another measure that I was opposed to, believing it inexpedient, oppressive and unnecessary; and as it would have cost the United States *three millions* of dollars, if the men were not called into actual service; and because I did not consider it a duty that the militia was bound, by the constitution, to perform; as I could not see any difference between detaching and impressing, and no provision, by which a person detached, whatever may have been the situation of himself or family could have been excused, by finding a substitute, or paying an equivalent; and because I considered those encampments, schools for vice, idleness and dissipation, believing that our youth would return from them much worse citizens, and no better soldiers. This bill, with all its imperfections passed the House of Representatives by the usual majority; but was postponed in the Senate.

The next bill of importance was offered late in the

session, as a substitute for the bill lost between the two houses; two of its provisions were similar to two in the first bill, as respected armed ships and the non-intercourse; but that part which related to our commercial relations with Great-Britain and France, permitted a free trade to both those nations, as long as they continued their injustice towards us; but if either of them should rescind their unjust decrees, and the other nation did not, within three months, follow the example, the President was authorized to interdict all commerce with the nation so refusing to rescind her decrees. But when this motion was under consideration, another substitute was offered for it by way of amendment, which had been agreed upon in caucus the evening before, and carried the same day it was offered, which was, to add *fifty per cent.* to the duties now collected on all importations from Great-Britain and France and their dependencies. This was said to be a measure of coercion and retaliation against those nations; as the President was authorized to abolish those duties on the importations from the nation who would rescind her decrees against us. This appeared to me to be a strange kind of retaliation on those who had injured us, by laying an enormous tax on ourselves, the effect of which would have been, to have given six or eight millions of dollars to the very rich importing merchants, in the great commercial cities, and to have operated as a tax on the consumer to that amount; and to have brought but little money into the Treasury. Those merchants who had those goods on hand, would have added the *fifty per cent.* to their prices, and it would have prevented importations to any extent. This tax I considered unjust and unnecessary; pernicious in its principles; and injurious in its consequences. If it was meant to have increased the revenue *fifty per cent.* it would not have answered the purpose; as political arithmetic differs very much from any other kind, in that *two* and *two*, will not make *four*. If you double your

duties, you do not double your revenue, nor increase it in proportion as you increase your duties; for whenever your duties are unreasonably high, you discourage importations, diminish consumption, and by offering a bounty, you increase smuggling; and instead of benefiting our revenue, we should have injured it. This, to me, was another wild scheme to protect our own citizens and to avenge their wrongs by taking from the poor and common class of people about *six* or *eight* millions of dollars, and giving it to a very few rich importing merchants: this would have been adding burdens to your injuries. But this bill, as strange as it may seem, passed the house of representatives by the usual majority, but the section laying the fifty per cent. duty was stricken out in the Senate, where, in my opinion, incalculable mischief was prevented, during a long, tedious and useless session to the nation. I was also opposed to this duty, because I thought when it was once put on, it would be difficult to get it off; as it is always easy to find reasons for laying taxes, raising salaries and increasing expences; but very difficult to find a suitable time, and proper place, to begin to reduce or retrench them; and because I thought if we conducted economically we should not want more money: and as to its being a measure of retaliation, it appeared to me to be perfectly ridiculous, to pass laws operating exclusively against ourselves, with a view to retaliate upon other nations, when it would have no other effect, but to make the rich very rich, and the common people, poor indeed.

Late in the session, resolutions were offered to reduce the army and navy. They passed the house by large majorities, and bills were ordered to be brought in for that purpose; and although the mover of them was very sincere, it was soon discovered that no reduction was to take place.

When I saw that the navy and army, the last year, had cost the United States five millions, seven hundred

and seventy three thousand, five hundred and thirty dollars, ninety-seven cents, (*D. 5,773,530 97 Cts.*) and that the army the last year had cost us eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand, three hundred and sixty-two dollars, eighteen cents, (*D. 828,362, 18 Cts.*) more than the army under Adams' administration the most extravagant year ; and that they had done but little other service than ditching and clearing a bog near New Orleans, in which service nearly one thousand of them, after suffering what no other men ever suffered, in any country, or on any occasion, ingloriously fell victims to disease !! I was in favour of the resolution for reducing the army to a peace establishment, which would have saved the nation at least two millions of dollars : and as it respects the navy, I was one of those in 1798 who thought we could not build, support and man a navy in this country, without distressing and oppressing the people very much; though our navy at that time, situated as the maritime nations were, did much towards protecting our commerce, and causing the American flag to be respected ; and maintained our rank and standing as a nation on the ocean, and our revenue continued to increase. And when I saw that in 1800 the navy in actual service was composed of eleven frigates, twenty-four ships, and other vessels carrying from thirty-two to twelve guns each, besides seven galleys ; and the whole number of seamen in actual service, exclusive of officers, amounted to upwards of *seven thousand three hundred*, and the officers of every description to *thirteen hundred and thirty-two* ; and that the expences of that year, (being the most expensive year) amounted to only three millions, four hundred forty-eight thousand, seven hundred and sixteen dollars, and three cents, (*D. 3,448,716, 3 Cts.*) that the revenue that very year, notwithstanding all our difficulties, increased two millions, four hundred and seventy thousand, four hundred and eighty-three dollars, and forty-two cents, (*D. 2,470,483 42 Cts.*) ; that with the help of this

navy, our maritime rights were established, and an honourable peace effected : and that in the year 1809, we had in service only four frigates, two ships, five brigs, two schooners, one cutter and twenty two gun boats ; the whole number of seamen, exclusive of the officers, amounted to two thousand seven hundred and twenty-three ; the officers of every description to one thousand and ninety-five ; and that those few ships and men cost us two millions, four hundred and twenty-seven thousand, seven hundred and fifty-eight dollars, and eighty cents, (*D.* 2,427,758, 80 *Cts.*) and in the same year our revenue decreased in the customs alone, nine millions, sixty-seven thousand, five hundred and thirty dollars (*D.* 9,067,530) and in that year, having on the non-intercourse law, our navy had nothing to do but to blockade our own ports. And when I saw that the expences of our navy since 1802 had almost three doubled, and its number much the same (except gun-boats, answering very little purpose to the nation) I had no hesitation in voting for its reduction ; and rather than to have such a navy in such hands, maintained at such expence, in the present situation of the world, I would vote for its annihilation ; believing it a curse to the nation, rather than a blessing.

The last bill that respected our foreign relations, and which passed into a law, makes it the duty of the President, whenever either France or Great-Britain shall revoke their unjust edicts against us, to put on the late non-intercourse against that nation who shall neglect or refuse to follow the example. A strange kind of legislation indeed ; that after the law had expired, we should put it in the power of any nation, by any act of theirs, to revive it against another nation ; and that the legislature of the United States should have no agency in it, only that the President should be made the agent, or humble tool of such nations to declare their will and pleasure, to revive a law against another nation.

An application was made to Congress for the renewal of the charter of the Bank of the United States.— Several plans were proposed, some to renew the old charter, others for a new bank. An institution of this kind seemed to be thought necessary to aid the operations of the general government : but the one that appeared to be the most favoured by the administration, contemplated the renewal of the old charter, for the stockholders to pay in cash 1,200,000 dollars : to agree to loan the government a large sum of money ; to increase the capital stock nine millions of dollars, which the United States were to take ; and to pay the United States an interest of three per cent. for the money deposited in the bank after it shall exceed three millions of dollars, and have been in the bank one year ; and upon giving the bank sixty days notice, that it shall continue there another year. I am against granting exclusive privileges to any persons whatever ; but if this institution should really be considered necessary to aid the administration in the management of its concerns, I should be in favour of renewing the charter, the stockholders paying in cash for the renewal, what it may be worth, and for the United States to have no further concern in it, than any other corporation or individual. I have no opinion of the government collecting money from the people to employ in speculating, or collecting it from them beyond the exigencies of the government, to deposit in the bank of the United States fourteen months without interest, and then to receive only three per cent. : when it is worth to those from whom it is collected, from six to eight per cent. : or for the purpose of lying useless to the nation in some favourite bank, which will enable them to encrease their discounts and dividends to answer political purposes. Not having the bill respecting this bank before me, some of the facts stated may be incorrect ; but according to the best of my recollection they are as above stated.

Whenever the revenue exceeds the real wants of

the government, instead of the administration rack-  
ing their inventions to find a subject to waste it upon,  
they ought to reduce the duties on sugar, molasses and  
tea, so as to reduce the revenue to the exigencies of  
the government, and let the people have their money  
to manage in their own way ; for it is with a govern-  
ment as with an individual, who in proportion to the  
sum of money he has by him, for which he has no  
immediate use, and the facility with which he can ac-  
quire more ; in the same proportion, generally, he is  
idle and extravagant. And as the support of a re-  
publican government depends on the affections of the  
people, they ought not to be put to unnecessary trouble  
or expence.

As to the charge against the minority of partiality  
to Great-Britain, this was intended to excite your  
prejudices, but it is not true. If the minority have  
been partial to Great-Britain, they have been treated  
with great ingratitude by her ; all her measures have  
tended to help the ruling party in this country ; and  
the measures of the present ruling party of the Unit-  
ed States have, in my opinion, tended to ruin the  
commerce and prosperity of our *once* flourishing na-  
tion, and to give to Great-Britain the commerce of  
the world : And if the last administration, while in se-  
cret conclave, had made a treaty with England, whose  
objects should have been to ruin the commerce and  
revenue of the United States, and to have increased  
that of Great-Britain ; and to have added to the value  
of her possessions in this country, they could not have  
done it more effectually.

As to measures of resistance, I have seen nothing  
that looked like it except the section sent from the Se-  
nate to the House of Representatives, in lieu of the  
fifty per cent. duty, which contemplated giving the  
President power to use the navy of the United States  
for the purpose of protecting its commerce ; but this  
was rejected, and the bill lost, because the Senate  
would not agree to the duty, nor the House to the pro-

tection. I saw much to christianize the good people of the United States, by impoverishing, afflicting and humiliating them; and but little to make them proceed by forcible resistance or effectual protection.

It is said, that it is chargeable to the minority that Great-Britain will not do us justice, and that they were the means of raising the embargo, which would have had a wonderful effect, if it could have been kept on. It would appear by the representation of the friends of the administration, that the minority, however small, have more influence at home and abroad, than the majority. What are the facts? The minority have no influence at home or abroad: They have no power to help or injure any nation: All they can do, is to acquaint the people what the administration are about; and this is what they have most to fear. The majority have the whole power and force of the nation: They have the sword and the purse-strings to use at their pleasure. Whenever they make a law, they ought to enforce it; and whenever they cease to enforce it, they ought immediately to repeal it. They ought to be ashamed to say that it cannot be enforced, because it was opposed in its *passage* by the minority, and that they are dissatisfied with it. If a law is not strictly enforced, it is either an acknowledgment by those who made it, that it is in itself improper, and ought not to be enforced; or that they are intirely incompetent, either to make or execute laws. Are the affairs of Great-Britain at a stand, whenever a weak or wicked ministry, have a majority against them? I believe not; their affairs go on, and the consequence is, a change in the ministry. If our government cannot make laws that they will execute and enforce, having the power so to do, it is acknowledging their incapacity to govern. As a citizen and republican; although I may oppose the *passage* of laws, yet I feel myself bound to submit to and enforce them, *when enacted*: And if we should imprudently get into a war, I feel myself bound to

aid the government in its prosecution, with my person, influence and property, to the last cent, against any nation in existence.

The minority are charged with being opposed to the federal government and constitution.—This comes with a very ill grace from those who were against the adoption of the constitution at first, who have been mutilating it since it was adopted, and who were anti-federalists, and have endeavoured to render the name of a federalist odious. As well may we expect a Turk to turn Christian, or a true Christian to endeavour to subvert the Christian religion, as to expect these people to be anxious to support a federal government, and the federalists to endeavour to destroy or overturn it, being its founders and supporters, with President WASHINGTON at their head.

As it respects Great-Britain and France, and their conduct towards us; Great-Britain has injured us very much, but she could have injured us more; though this is no excuse for what she has done.

With France we had a treaty,—the Emperor pretended friendship,—held out allurements for our citizens to go to his ports. He has taken all our vessels, (or floating colonies as he calls them) on the high seas, that he could carry home; and sunk and burnt (after plundering them) all those that he could not. All our vessels that have been sent to France, to trade in a friendly manner, have been seized and confiscated; those that were driven there, by the act of God, in distress, or that have been shipwrecked on their coast, have shared the same fate: and even a vessel, carrying property belonging to the United States, to pay a just debt, could not escape him. In addition to this, he has made a treaty with his brother of Holland, in which his brother was compelled to deliver him the American property in his possession for confiscation; And then the Emperor of France, had the impudence, in the face of the world, to tell our minister, that he had done us no injury;—that we were without honour or energy,

and that our government had never complained of his treatment towards us.

During all this time, what has been the conduct of our government and its agents towards the citizens of the United States, as it respects those nations? We have had a letter addressed to our minister in London respecting the conduct of the British minister (Jackson) published in this country before it reached the person to whom it was addressed: We have had a letter from that minister to our Secretary of State, which could not be seen by the public; but was made any, and every thing, to answer party purposes. If he had time to write an unofficial letter, and it contained nothing but the truth, why not official, so that the whole nation could have been benefited by it? If it contained the truth, and it was improper to make it public, why were a party permitted to see it, and take extracts from it for publication, to answer electioneering purposes? It was stated, that Mr. Pinkney in that letter observed, that the British government disapproved of Mr. Jackson's conduct, and said he was in the wrong—that he would be recalled, and that a minister of *high rank* and talents would be immediately sent out in his room. Now it is evident, that, if that letter did contain such information, that the fact has turned out otherwise: the minister's conduct is approved by his government:—he is not recalled, nor has this minister of *high rank* been sent out to gratify the pride of our republican court.

As it respects France, we have not been so fortunate as to have letters from our government to our minister in France, published in this country before they were sent to him, or to have very early information from our minister, either official or unofficial; or from our government until it has been published in Great-Britain and France, and many of the newspapers in the United States. Early last fall, a letter purporting to be from Champagny to our minister in France, was published in England and in the United

States, the authenticity of which was denied by the ruling party in this country, and declared to have been an English forgery, and from the insolence of the letter, this was generally believed; but after a considerable time had elapsed, and the letter almost forgotten, it was then published by our government as a genuine letter, with some trifling variations in the translation.

Early this spring we had another letter from Champagne to Gen. Armstrong, published in Great-Britain, France and the United States, in language still more insolent and indecorous. This was also passed off upon the people as a forgery, and from its contents gained general belief. But after the minority had in vain tried to get sight of it, and after Congress had adjourned, it was then published as a genuine letter, with the very manly and dignified answer of our minister.— This last letter of the French minister, seemed to complete the measure of our humiliation and degradation.

Now if our government have not published every little thing that would tend to excite resentment against Great-Britain, and kept from the people their real situation as it respects France, then have they not been partial to France! Of this you must judge for yourselves.

At any rate there certainly has an uncommon fatality attended all our information from France; the fault cannot be in our minister; it would have been criminal in him to the highest degree, to have kept back information so important. On whom then does it rest? We have had an expensive navy, that has had little other business to do but to be employed as despatch vessels. How then does it happen that those insolent letters from Champagne should be published in every part of the United States, and the authenticity of them denied, before they had reached the office of the Secretary of State? Or if they had arrived why had they not have been published, that the citizens of

the United States could have known our real situation with France, that they might have guarded themselves accordingly

Much has been said in former and better days, respecting the extravagance of Mr. Adams, his predilection for monarchy, and his removing his son from one nation to another to encrease his emolument. As I did not justify him then, I shall not pretend to deny but what many things were done by him, and under his administration that were inexpedient and unnecessary; particularly *his* land tax and *his* standing army. I call them *his*, because it was in *his* power and no other person's, to have prevented them; but notwithstanding he approved of those measures, as soon as he found the current of popularity running against him, in order, I presume, to appease the party and save himself, he dismissed from office some of the most upright and faithful men in the administration. But all would not answer; the administration was changed, and for a short time conducted with a little more economy; for in the year 1802 the expences of the navy and army were only two millions, ninety-four thousand, nine hundred and sixty dollars, and twelve cents, (*D. 2,094,960 12 Cts.*) and in 1809 they were five millions, seven hundred and seventy-three thousand, five hundred and thirty dollars, ninety-seven cents, (*D. 5,773,530 97 Cts.*) being three millions, six hundred and seventy-eight thousand, five hundred and seventy dollars, eighty-five cents, (*D. 3,678,570 85 Cts.*) more than in 1802. But they soon got into the track of their predecessors, when those who had the greatest hand in destroying the former administration, turned apostates, and went hand in hand with the new one, praising and promoting each other, until they soon exceeded the former administration in the most extravagant of its years.

But for this the French Revolution furnishes an example. In France a correction of error and abuse, which had for a long time prevailed in their govern-

ment, was commenced by honest, honourable and intelligent men, with intentions pure, virtuous and patriotic. When they had attained the end which they believed would ensure the happiness of the nation, and were desirous that no further innovation or alteration should be made, either in the established form of the government, or the manner of its administration; and were endeavouring to restore the nation to that state of tranquillity and quiet which alone could enable it to enjoy the benefit of the alteration which had been made, a more zealous and infuriated party arose like a torrent; those who commenced the Revolution, were obliged to retire before it. They deluged the country with blood, and overturned every institution of law, order, religion and morality. The nation rung with the cries of *Liberty* and *Equality*; the downfall of tyranny, and long live the Republic. The people were deluded and deceived by those pleasing sounds, and not imagining that the patriots who called themselves exclusively the friends of the people, could ever sanction any measure which would militate against their rights, surrendered into their hands the reins of government,—placed the most implicit confidence in their patriotism and integrity, and indulged themselves in the golden dreams of liberty and happiness, until compelled by a long succession of oppression to review their situation, they are astonished to find themselves the slaves of a Conqueror, and firmly bound in the chains of a military despot.

You changed the administration, because it was in favour of standing armies, and navies, and extravagant in the expenditure of your money. The new administration, on their accession to power, declared themselves opposed to standing armies and navies. Economy was their watch-word, and the mouth of labour was not to be deprived of the bread it had earned. You were disposed to credit these assertions and professions, because you wished them to be true.—Their acts the first year of their government, did in

some measure accord with their professions. The army and navy were reduced, and the public expenditure lessened. This was to you conclusive proof of their sincerity, integrity and patriotism; and you surrendered to them your whole confidence. But a new party, like the infuriates of the French revolution, has arisen, composed of apostate federalists, and of men who had but little part in bringing about the change in the administration: men whose sole care is the loaves and fishes; and not unlike those plunderers on the theatre of war, who always choose to follow the victorious army. After the first year of the new administration, economy was abandoned for extravagance. Navies and standing armies were no longer considered improper and unnecessary — The people's money has been spent with a lavish hand; and even Mr. Jefferson's surplus fund has vanished, without the necessity of applying it to roads, canals, or the advancement of literature. This self-styled economical administration has spent, two millions, eight hundred and twenty-seven thousand, eight hundred and ninety-one dollars, and three cents, (*D. 2,827,891 03 Cts.*) annually of your money more than the old administration, as will appear by the account of the Treasury department; and can you still believe them economical? But still do they keep up the cry of the extravagance of the former administration, to prevent an inquiry into their own wasteful expenditure. I only ask you to read and examine the official statements of the expences of both administrations, and judge for yourselves. In the House of Representatives of the United States, Randolph, Macon, Stanford, Lyon and others, have been, by the force of these stubborn facts, compelled to oppose the measures of the present administration, with the same zeal that they did those of the former.

I ask you to reflect, and examine for yourselves, before it is too late. Judge of men by their practice, and not by their professions. Judge of the economy

of the administration by the sums of money they have expended, and the objects of expenditure. There appears to me to be as great a difference between the minority and majority as it respects real and practical republicanism, as there is between a hypocrite and a Christian: A hypocrite professes religion, and a Christian practices it. The majority profess republicanism, and the minority practice it. Instead of blaming the minority for having the independence to oppose measures which they consider improper or injurious to the nation; you ought coolly and candidly to examine into the motives and reasons that influence their conduct; and when you find that their opposition to those measures is well-grounded, you ought to support them against the clamour of the servile friends of the administration; and unless this be done, there is no freedom of elections;—no safety in a representative government.

When the majority is very large, they become regardless of the interest and liberty of the people. They consider themselves raised above the power of their constituents; and if they can persuade the people that the minority, when they oppose measures which they consider weak or wicked, are opposers of the government—your constitution, has become a dead letter, and the doctrine of passive-obedience and non-resistance revived in its fullest extent.

With all our boast of republicanism, we have had a Directory composed of members of Congress, who at the close of a presidential term, have in caucus directed the people who to elect President and Vice-President, and the people have obeyed their mandates.—And after the election of the President, the same Directory have claims on him, in proportion to their industry and influence in procuring his election.

In order to give you a correct view of the operations of the government, under the different administrations, I have taken from the report of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, which I have

in my possession, the amount of the annual receipts and expenditures of the several administrations, from the commencement of the government to the end of the last year, by which it appears, that

The Washington and Adams administration received in twelve years, ending on the first day of January, 1801, including duties, internal taxes, loans, &c. &c. *D.* 89,568,684 67

They paid, during said time, towards the Debt, *D.* 22,465,906 75

They left Cash in the Treasury, 2,600,000 00

*D.* 25,065,906 75

Spent by the Washington and Adams administration in twelve years, *D.* 64,502,777 92

Making *D.* 5,375,231 47 *Cts.* annually.

Jefferson's Administration received in eight years,

Cash in the Treasury, left by the old Administration, *D.* 2,600,000 00

Received for duties, internal taxes, sales of land, &c. 113,464,980 00

*D.* 116,064,980 00

They left in the Treasury, *D.* 9,440,000

Paid towards the old Debt, 41,000,000

*D.* 50,440,000 00

Spent by Jefferson's Administration in eight years, *D.* 65,624,980 00

Making eight millions, two hundred and three thousand, one hundred and twenty-two Dollars, and fifty Cents, (*D.* 8,203,122 50 *Cts.*) annually; being two millions, eight hundred and twenty-seven thousand, eight hundred and ninety-one Dollars, three Cents, (*D.* 2,827,891 3 *Cts.*) more annually, than the Washington and Adams administration.

And in addition to this, it ought to be considered; that the old administration were necessarily compelled to expend large sums of money in prosecuting an expensive Indian war, and in quelling the western insurrection:—In building and purchasing frigates and other vessels of war; and in purchasing timber sufficient to build *six* ships of *seventy-four* guns each, and in fortifying the ports and harbours of the U. S.

Nothing but the anti-republican doctrines now inculcated among the people, would have induced this publication from me at this time; being unaccustomed to writing for any other purpose than for the trans-

acting of my own business. But when a minority, because they oppose measures, that they think unwise, imprudent and unnecessary, and which will increase the burdens of the people, are charged with being enemies to their country, and opposers of the government, I thought I would state to you what part I had taken in the measures before Congress, since my election as your Representative.


As a federalist, I am for supporting the general government in the full exercise of all the powers given it by the Constitution, and no further. As a republican, I am for an elective government, and for an economical and republican administration;—for the sovereignty of the State governments, and for retaining all the power from the general government, not expressly given them by the people: and against any persons holding an office under the general and state governments at the same time, and for the people's retaining in their own hands, their own property, until the exigencies of the government shall actually require it.

As your Representative, I hold it a right, and feel it a duty, to exercise my own judgment in opposing the passage of any law, that I think will operate against the interest of my constituents, and the nation; and all that can be required of any citizen is, that after the law is passed, however improper he may deem it, to submit to it during its continuance, making use of all the constitutional means in his power to procure its repeal. But if it may be called opposing the government, to oppose measures calculated, in my opinion, to lead this country into a war; or to oppose the raising of *one hundred thousand* soldiers, to be encamped ten days in a year, to corrupt the morals of the people, and lay additional burdens upon them;—to oppose the laying of an additional duty of *fifty* per cent. on the people, already sufficiently oppressed, under the pretext of retaliation, when it operates exclusively on this country;—or for being

in favour of reducing the army and navy (which have been almost useless to the nation, and which have cost us the last year, five millions, seven hundred and seventy-three thousand, five hundred and thirty dollars, and ninety-seven cents, (*D.* 5,773,530.97) to prevent not only the necessity of laying additional burdens; but to enable the government to reduce the duties on the necessaries of life; if this is opposing government, I have done it, and shall do it again.— If it is to be considered criminal to oppose any measure introduced by the most intemperate, imprudent, and simple members of the majority, our republican government is at an end:—We retain the name, but have lost the substance; and it is useless to choose persons to represent you.

ELISHA R. POTTER.

*South-Kingstown, August 11, 1810.*

*ERRATUM.*— The Reader will please correct an error of the Press, in Page 13, 3d and 4th line. for "proceed," read "proud."

*STATEMENT of the Gross Annual Amount of Receipts into the Treasury, from the 4th of March, 1789, to 31st December, 1809.*

| YEARS.                 |      | GROSS AMOUNT.  |
|------------------------|------|----------------|
| From the 4th of March, | 1789 |                |
| to the 31st December,  | 1791 | 4 771,342 43   |
|                        | 1792 | 8 772,458 76   |
|                        | 1793 | 6,450,195 15   |
|                        | 1794 | 9 439,855 65   |
|                        | 1795 | 9 515 758 59   |
|                        | 1796 | 8 740,329 65   |
|                        | 1797 | 8,758,780 99   |
|                        | 1798 | 8,179,170 80   |
|                        | 1799 | 12 546,813 31  |
|                        | 1800 | 12 413,978 34  |
|                        | 1801 | 12,945 455 95  |
|                        | 1802 | 14 995,793 95  |
|                        | 1803 | 11 064,097 63  |
|                        | 1804 | 11 826,307 38  |
|                        | 1805 | 13 560,693 20  |
|                        | 1806 | 15 559,931 7   |
|                        | 1807 | 16,452 839 44  |
|                        | 1808 | 17,060 661 93  |
|                        | 1809 | 7,773 473 12   |
|                        |      | 210,827,937 34 |

*A Statement, exhibiting the gross Annual Amount of Expenditures, in Relation to the Military and Naval Establishments, from the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, 1789, to the End of the Year 1809.*

| Years.                                                                                     | Mil. Estab.   | Naval Estab.  | Total.        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| From the 1 <sup>st</sup> March, 1789, to the 31 <sup>st</sup> December, 1791, For the Year |               |               |               |
| 1792.                                                                                      | 632,804.03    | 632,804.03    | 1,265,608.06  |
| 1793.                                                                                      | 1,103,048.47  | 1,103,048.47  | 2,206,096.94  |
| 1794                                                                                       | 1,132,443.91  | 1,132,443.91  | 2,264,887.82  |
| 1795                                                                                       | 2,589,097.59  | 61,408.97     | 2,650,506.56  |
| 1796,                                                                                      | 2,422,385.81  | 410,562.03    | 2,832,947.84  |
| 1797                                                                                       | 1,246,327.82  | 274,784.04    | 1,521,111.86  |
| 1798,                                                                                      | 1,002,299.04  | 382,631.89    | 1,384,930.93  |
| 1799,                                                                                      | 1,939,692.39  | 1,381,347.76  | 3,321,040.15  |
| 1800,                                                                                      | 2,405,669.17  | 2,858,081.84  | 5,263,751.01  |
| 1801,                                                                                      | 2,517,409.99  | 3,448,716.03  | 5,966,126.02  |
| 1802                                                                                       | 1,600,944.08  | 2,111,424.00  | 3,712,368.08  |
| 1803                                                                                       | 1,179,148.25  | 915,811.87    | 2,094,960.12  |
| 1804,                                                                                      | 822,055.85    | 1,246,317.89  | 2,068,373.74  |
| 1805,                                                                                      | 875,923.93    | 1,273,860.25  | 2,149,784.18  |
| 1806,                                                                                      | 712,781.28    | 1,597,500.00  | 2,310,281.28  |
| 1807,                                                                                      | 1,224,355.38  | 1,649,641.44  | 2,873,996.82  |
| 1808,                                                                                      | 1,288,685.91  | 1,722,064.47  | 3,010,750.38  |
| 1809,                                                                                      | 2,900,834.43  | 1,884,067.80  | 4,784,902.23  |
|                                                                                            | 3,345,772.17  | 2,427,758.80  | 5,773,530.97  |
|                                                                                            | 30,941,669.47 | 23,645,979.08 | 54,587,648.55 |

Treasury Department, Register's Office, 3<sup>d</sup> April, 1810.

(Signed)

JOSEPH NOURSE, Register.









